

Environmental inspectors expose pollution problems

China's environmental inspectors found that nearly two-thirds of the more than 32,000 enterprises they checked have violated environmental rules.

The findings came after three months of inspections across 28 cities in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and other nearby areas, which resulted in the discovery of problems including excessive emissions and insufficient pollution control equipment, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) said Friday.

The inspectors, who are on a year-long on-site investigation to discover the sources of air pollution in the region, exposed 6,662 companies with unauthorized locations, lacking relevant certificates, or failing to meet emission standards.

The teams also found nearly 2,000 companies have been operating without any pollutant treatment facilities, while another 1,732 companies have pollutant treatment facilities that have been malfunctioning.

MEP official Tian Weiyong said the ministry will urge local authorities to further investigate these firms and rectify the problems.

The MEP will also send inspectors to recheck these companies, ensuring the problems be rectified, he said.

The inspections are part of China's campaign to fight pollution and environmental degradation as decades of growth have left the country saddled with smog and contaminated soil.

China started the inspections amid widespread concerns about smog in its northern region.

Tian said such inspections have helped control air pollution in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and other nearby areas.